Swipe Right (Again)

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by miasmatik

Summary

Hannibal embarks on a journey to find Will's Tinder profile. It's more difficult than expected.

Direct sequel to "Swipe Right", for all you crack-loving Hannigram readers out there <3

Notes

Welp, I had more than a few of you ask for a sequel, so I did it! Also, this AU has been way too much fun not to play with, so I drew a little comic accompaniment.

Hope you all enjoy ;)

See the end of the work for more notes

The next day, Hannibal comes to the realization that this will be harder than he expected.

He reads through the app download instructions and grimaces when they reference a required Facebook profile. He spends fifteen minutes setting up an account, then the next fifteen minutes after that attempting to configure his privacy settings to the maximum level. He'd prefer not to have acquaintances sending him friend requests, or "cute" cat videos.

Once he has worked around the infuriating interface, Hannibal is left to consider his Tinder profile. He knows Will is interested. He also knows that the charming creature may choose to deny the connection they shared – at least in the immediate future – and Hannibal would prefer not to wait.

He places his phone down and finishes sautéing the liver he procured last night, thinking over his options. He decides that the subtle route may work best. He already knows Will's M.O.; he'll just need to make himself the perfect target.

He inputs his age, location, and edits his screen name to a simple "H." After some internal debate, he loosens his tie, flicks open the top button of his dress shirt, and snaps a photo. He crops it between his lips and collarbone. Neck prominently featured, of course.

Hannibal spends more time contemplating the brief bio he's expected to provide. In the end, he suppresses a cringe and types out: *Looking for a dinner companion and pleasant company. Younger men preferred*.

His entire being rebels at the distastefulness of the whole affair.

He also soon discovers that the difficulty has only begun.

The sheer number of younger men in Baltimore seeking older partners is already overwhelming. Some of the profiles are as vague as his, vague enough that he wonders if it could be Will behind them, so he swipes and waits for a connection.

After the third request for nudes, Hannibal is growing concerned. After the fifth unsolicited dick pic, Hannibal is losing hope. After someone calls him "daddy," Hannibal considers deleting his account.

Nevertheless, he persists.

Between prepping human finger sandwiches for his dinner party, Hannibal spends his weekend hours sifting through crude profiles that truly all deserve spots in his Rolodex. But he doesn't find Will.

Matthew does not show up to the morgue on Monday. Dead or alive.

Hannibal bides his time over the rest of the week, patient and professional as always. There are plenty new bodies to occupy his attention, but he finds that cutting into dead people isn't giving him the same level of satisfaction that he's used to. One of the corpses arrives in an array of jigsaw-like puzzle pieces, and even that doesn't excite him like it usually would.

By Thursday, he's feeling irritable and antsy. He's sitting at home, a fourth glass of some expensive cabernet in hand, and doing his nightly scroll-through. He's contemplating another murder or two just to blow off some steam when it happens.

He lands on Will's profile.

Hannibal almost drops his wine glass. He suddenly knows why the younger man has had no trouble finding unsuspecting blood donors.

Mrasmatik '17

The Will that stares up at him is cocky and confident – almost glowing, even. Not the awkward, blushing creature he is already privileged to know. It's ridiculously enchanting and Hannibal can feel his own cheeks heat as a result of it.

The description provided below the photo is brief but to the point:

Will, 32
Dog lover. Night person. Feel free to message, but know that I bite ;)

Hannibal has never swiped right faster in his life.

He actually does tip over his wine when the screen alerts him that they've been matched.

After a few frantic minutes of trying to mitigate the damage to his suit and chair upholstery, Hannibal opens up the chat feature. His thumb hovers over the screen. He forces himself to take a few deep breaths and reassemble his composure before he types out a short greeting.

Good evening. How are you?

It's bland enough that he hopes it won't come across as too eager, although he's fairly sure Will hasn't recognized him. He doubts the younger man would have liked his profile in the first place if that had been the case. Still, he sits in wine-soaked dress pants and bites at a thumbnail while he waits.

He doesn't have to wait long.

Hey, a text bubble pops up. *I'm alright, how r u?*

Hannibal squints at the casual speech, but his fingers are already typing a response.

Much better, now that I've been matched with you.

He thinks on it for a second, wonders if it's perhaps too forward, but he clicks send before he can delete the words. He just hopes that Will enjoys his infatuated swooning and finds him an easy enough target.

Haha, smooth. I like ur profile pic btw

Hannibal smiles. He knew the neck was a good idea.

Thank you. I suspect that your photo pales in comparison to the real you.

This is veering towards the fast lane much sooner than Hannibal intended. He pours himself another glass of wine and wonders if he isn't already a little buzzed. Minutes tick by with no response, then:

Wanna meet up and find out?

Hannibal is about to get up and grab his car keys when he remembers his stained clothes. And the fact that he has no idea when Will means anyways.

Tonight? He shoots back, just to be sure.

Why not? I haven't had dinner yet, if you're down to treat ;)

Hannibal is definitely a bit drunk, because he is grinning like an idiot and already heading upstairs to change suits. He texts back an affirmative, calls the fanciest restaurant he knows will still be serving, and makes a reservation for two. He's got a little under an hour to prepare, and he spends half of that time debating with himself about tie patterns. He spends the remaining time lamenting the fact that he's perhaps too inebriated to actually drive, so he finishes the bottle and calls an Uber.

Hannibal arrives at the restaurant ten minutes before their meeting time. He allows himself to be seated, slicks back his hair, and musters up an air of cool sobriety. It isn't the first time and it won't be the last. He is an experienced socialite, after all.

It's nearly ruined the moment Will walks through the front door.

He's dressed in a maroon button down and black slacks, his curls swept to the side except for one hanging above his forehead. He's more shaven than he was last week - when he showed up in Hannibal's morgue as a scruffy corpse - and there's a faint smile on his face as he scans the room. Hannibal understands, truly, just why Matthew hadn't been able to shut up about him.

Then Will sees him and the friendly expression drops.

"Oh hell no," the younger man says, striding over with his hands firmly grounded in his pockets. Hannibal suspects Will would like to strange him. The thought of it makes him grin as the other man approaches.

Will stops at the side of the table and glares down at him. He opens his mouth to say something more, but Hannibal takes his hand within his own and brings it up for a kiss. He presses lips to cool knuckles for a beat, then draws back and looks up.

"Good evening, William. It's very good to see you again."

Will is beet red.

He yanks his hand out of the older man's grasp and tries to look angry, but all Hannibal can see is an adorable little blush and nervous eyes. Will braces himself and looks like he might just turn around and leave. Hannibal's heart catches. Will stares back at him.

Finally, he slumps into the empty seat with a weary sigh.

"God, you're embarrassing." Will scruffs a hand through his curls, disheveling the perfectly coiffed locks. He does not meet Hannibal's eyes. Hannibal accepts the challenge.

“I apologize for misleading you,” he begins, noting the way the younger man stiffens. “But I found myself impatient to be in your presence again and-”

“I should have killed you already,” Will interrupts blandly. He fiddles with the edge of the tablecloth and still won’t look up.

Hannibal melts just a little bit more.

Their waiter clears his throat.

“Um, excuse me,” he says, eyes darting nervously between the man grumbling about death and the pining one sitting across from him. “May I take your drink order?”

“The most expensive thing you have,” Will turns to him suddenly. The smile he tries for comes out menacing, and the server shrinks back. “I don’t care what it is, just a bottle of that.”

Hannibal watches the exchange and shrugs when the waiter glances at him with worry. The startled man nods. He rattles off the dinner specials, hands them their menus, and quickly takes his leave.

“You said you were treating,” Will reminds him. In the most exaggerated movement, he opens a menu and slams it down on the table between them. Hannibal can barely see his eyes wandering over the page, but he can tell that Will isn’t really reading.

“Are you always this charming with your dates?”

“Just the ones that trick me.”

“Ironic, really.” Hannibal muses, skimming over the selection himself. The filet sounds good, but he’s contemplating the ravioli.

“Tell me,” he continues. “Are they smitten until the last moment? Glad that you’re the last thing they see?”

Will slams the menu back down. An older couple looks over from a few tables away, but Hannibal smiles at them and they turn back around hastily.

“I could ask you the same thing,” Will growls. His fingers tap at the table with impatience, but the expression on his face is teetering between annoyance and genuine curiosity.

“How could they be? I could never match your radiance, the raw hunger in your eyes as you stare down your prey, the way your cheeks color so beautifully-”

“Uh,” the server says, standing at the edge of the table again with an awkward grip on their bottle of wine.

Will looks ready to combust in humiliation.

“I’m leaving,” he chokes out, moves to shuffle out of his seat. Hannibal matches the motions with ease, as if it was his idea to storm out of the restaurant and make a scene.

“I apologize,” he says, fishing out his wallet and handing the confused waiter several large bills without looking. “That should cover it.”

Will has only gotten a few feet away before Hannibal falls into step beside him. The younger man twists his head and ignores him, digs his hands back into his pockets, and huffs when Hannibal matches his pace evenly. By the time they’re at the exit, his shoulders have lost some of their tension. He sighs again when Hannibal moves to open the door for him without asking.

“You have to stop doing shit like that,” Will says as they step outside. He scuffs at the pavement with his feet and grumbles, though his words have lost much of their heat. “Just go back inside and leave me be. Besides, weren’t you hungry?”

“I find perfect nourishment in the sight of you, my dear.”

Will lets out an indignant squeak, and Hannibal uses the opportunity to take his arm and guide him around the side of the building. There’s no resistance as he tucks them into the shadow of the alley, just wide eyes staring back as Hannibal pulls away slightly and smiles.

“You, on the other hand, were expecting to feed. I promised you dinner, did I not?”

He adjusts his tie and leans into the brick wall behind him, one hand still on the other man’s sleeve. His fingers unlatch the first button of his shirt, and Will’s eyes zero in on the action. Just like before, like last week, he seems to drift closer without thinking. He’s takes a tentative step forward, until he’s hovering right in front of Hannibal, trying and failing to not look enraptured by the proceedings.

Hannibal knows he’s taking a risk. He knows Will is used to murdering his food, but that thought alone draws Hannibal further into this feeling, this excitement, the quickening of his heart beat. Will is inches away, flustered and hungering, and Hannibal breathes out as he leans in.

Then Will freezes.

“Oh my god, you’re drunk. Is that why you’re being so cheesy?”

Hannibal frowns and tightens his grip on Will’s arm with a pressure that would bruise anyone else. “I am perfectly capable of making rational decisions.”

That gets a soft chuckle out of the other man, but he’s visibly reigning in his interest as Hannibal speaks. The older man doesn’t appreciate the condescension, even as the smile on Will’s face turns more genuine. So Hannibal pulls him back in and places lips at his ears.

He’s about to make an innuendo about the length of Will’s teeth, something about how he’d take every inch of them easily, when another voice startles them both out of their reprieve.

“Wow, we’re going to eat Dr. Lecter?”

Hannibal turns his head and blinks.

“No,” Will sighs. He follows Hannibal’s gaze to the man standing a few feet away and looking between them intently. “We’re not eating him.”

“Matthew,” Hannibal says, clearing his head and trying to comprehend what he’s seeing. His lost assistant smiles back with shark-like teeth and the older man suddenly feels very weary.

“Are you sure?” Matthew begins to creep closer. “Could I at least try a piece?”

Will snarls and Hannibal’s heart skips a beat. The younger man is so stunning, he all but forgets about his ex-assistant staring at him like a cut of meat.

“No, Matt, I swear to God if you don’t go wait for me back on the street you are going to have to fend for yourself.”

Matthew pulls a lovelorn face, casts an appraising, if not envious look at Hannibal, but obediently retreats. When he’s no longer breathing down their necks, Will looks back to the older man with a grimace that borders on sheepish.

“Sorry, fledglings are the worst.”

Hannibal raises his eyebrows but doesn’t attempt speech.

“I was, uh, distracted last week and may have accidentally turned him instead of killing him? Totally your fault, by the way,” Will grumbles and stares at the ground. “I kept thinking about your blood and I wasn’t paying attention and-”

Hannibal would be immensely pleased if he wasn’t already thinking up ways to murder newborn vampires and squash his misplaced jealousy.

“He’s just hanging around ‘til he learns how to feed. I told him I’d kill him if he doesn’t leave after that, so I think he’s just being difficult because he’s still obsessed with me-”

Hannibal is actively planning an attack on his undead assistant now, fashioning wooden stakes in his head and mentally cataloguing the amount of garlic in his pantry.

“-but I’d rather make sure he’s killing responsibly than just setting him loose because you know how it is, if he goes too murder-happy all at once it’s going to look bad for all of us and-”

Will cuts himself off, noticing the blankness that has overtaken Hannibal’s expression. He pries his arm out from the older man’s grasp, but the irritation on his face has all but disappeared. Instead, he meets Hannibal’s eyes and tilts his head, his gaze flitting across the older man’s disheveled appearance. And the faint sneer Hannibal isn’t sure he’s hiding that well.

“You really are ridiculous,” Will snorts. “Even though you’re a dick.”

Hannibal frowns deeper. “You have little idea of how many I had to see to get you here. I was unaware of how acceptable it is to share genitalia on social media.”

The younger man laughs for real, and Hannibal lets a little more of his control slip in response.

“Do you not feel it too? The connection between us, the desire to know more, to explore this resonance deeper?”

“Not if you keep making it weird,” Will assures, but he’s no longer shying away from their eyes meeting. He bites at his lip and continues. “But seriously, if I don’t feed Mr. Stalker out there, I’m gonna spend the whole night dealing with bad poetry about my eyes and hungry whining.”

Hannibal does not declare his intent on hunting Matthew down as soon as his reflexes are back to speed. He also pushes away the urge to insist that Will does not go, because that borders dangerously on desperate, and even now he still has some pride to upkeep.

He’s startled when Will’s fingers trace the pulse in his neck. He sees a bit of warmth return to the younger man’s cheeks and a smile steals into the next words that Will speaks.

“Maybe I’ll let you make it up to me?”

Will runs his tongue along his teeth, ducks in and scents the older man beneath the wine and delight the action elicits.

“I’d rather not share” is the last thing he whispers before he leaves.

It’s enough to sustain Hannibal for the time being.

End Notes

Your kudos try to avoid unwanted dick pics, your comments give Hannibal ibuprofen for his hangover tomorrow morning.

A/N 2021: I doubt I'll ever continue this series, but I still cherish and appreciate every one of your comments. Thanks for all the love over the years!

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Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!